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## Applying for a Zoning Variance or Appeal

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All variance and appeal applications are heard by a Hearings Officer who is a Murray City resident appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the City Council.

### Overview

Utah State Law requires all communities that have adopted zoning to adopt an Appeal Authority to provide a process for relief of any injustice that may arise with the strict application of the land use ordinance. The Hearings Officer is the Appeal Authority for Murray City. The Hearings Officer is authorized to hear appeals of Planning Commission decisions or administrative decisions. The Hearings Officer shall review the record to determine whether a decision was so unreasonable as to be arbitrary and capricious, or stated differently, where there is substantial evidence in the record to support the Planning Commission's or administrative official's decision.

Under certain limited circumstances, the Hearings Officer is authorized to "modify" the terms of the land use ordinance by granting a zoning variance. A variance is a modification of the terms of the land use ordinance in cases where the land use ordinance imposes an undue hardship on a property owner. By State Law, the Hearings Officer may only grant a variance under the following circumstances:

- 1. The literal enforcement of the zoning ordinance would cause an unreasonable hardship for the applicant that is not necessary to carry out the general purpose of the land use ordinance.** (The term "hardship: cannot be interpreted as personal or economic hardship. The hardship must be created by the land and not by a personal problem of the property owner. The hardship cannot be self-imposed or created by the current of past owner.)
- 2. There are special circumstances attached to the property that do not generally apply to other properties in the same district.** (There must be some physical feature of the property that is unique to the site such as shape, topography, etc. that is preventing strict adherence to the ordinance).
- 3. Granting the variance is essential to the enjoyment of a substantial property right possessed by other properties in the same district.** (There must be some characteristic of your property which is preventing you from enjoying a property right which others in your same neighborhood have.)

**4. The variance will not substantially affect the general plan and will not be contrary to the public interest.** (The proposed variance must be in conformance with the spirit of the Murray City General Plan. The Hearings Officer may not grant use variances.)

**5. The spirit of the zoning ordinance is observed and substantial justice is done.** (Although not meeting the letter of the ordinance, a variance request must still meet the intent of the ordinance.)

**Submittal Deadline:**

Application for a variance or an appeal must be submitted to the Murray City Community & Economic Development Division, located at 4646 South 500 West by 10:00 a.m. at least three weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date of the Hearings Officer.

Incomplete applications may delay processing of the application and subsequent scheduling before the Hearings Officer.

**Meeting Dates:**

Who?	Hearings Officer
When?	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.
Where?	Murray City Hall Council Chambers, 5025 South State Street

**Application Fee (Non-refundable)**

- ☐ Variance Request      \$250
- ☐ Expansion of Nonconforming Use      \$250
- ☐ Appeal      \$100

**Application Process:**

**Step 1. Contact the Community & Economic Development Division.** Meet informally with a member of the planning division staff to discuss your variance or appeal request and review the issues, procedures and fee associated with the application.

**Step 2. Submit Application:** For all variances and appeals submit and provide the following information:

- ☐ Completed Hearings Officer Application;
- ☐ A signed and notarized owner's affidavit;

- Pay the filing fee. Make checks payable to Murray City Corporation;
- Submit one (1) copy of variance related plans, site plans, floor plans, building elevations and other related plans and documents;
- Identify the area where the variance is requested;
- All plans to be drawn with accurate dimensions to a standard architects or engineers scale (i.e. 1" = 10', 1/8 inch = 1' , etc.) with north arrow and date of drawing. Show property lines, adjoining streets, water ways, existing and proposed buildings, parking areas, driveways, etc.;
- If submitting a large architectural plan, you must also include an 8 1/2 x 11 inch reduced copy;
- Provide any other information required by the Community & Economic Development staff;
- For appeals, provide a written statement of the reasons for the appeal and any related information, details and plans;
- A Hearings poster will be provided to the applicant to post on the property at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

**Step 3. Attend the Hearings Officer Meeting.** The applicant will be sent a copy of the Hearings Officer agenda in advance of the meeting date. Information on the agenda will give the date, place and time of the meeting. The applicant or an authorized representative must be in attendance at the meeting. If no representative is present, the Hearing Officer may move it to the next agenda item. It will be up to the applicant to reschedule another hearing date and pay the appropriate fee. An application may be "tabled" or "continued" if the Officer needs additional information or time to consider the application. A copy of the report of the decision will be available to the applicant at the Community & Economic Development office one week following the Hearing.

**Appeal of Hearings Officer Decision:** Murray City or any person directly aggrieved by any decision of the Hearings Officer may have and maintain a plenary action for relief therefrom in any court of competent jurisdiction; provided, petition for such relief is presented to the court within thirty (30 days) after the date of the decision.

# HEARINGS OFFICER APPLICATION

**Type of Application (check all that apply):**

☐ **Variance**                      ☐ **Expansion of Non-Conforming Use**    ☐ **Appeal**

Subject Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel Identification (Sidwell) Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning Classification: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name (If applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Name (If different): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of variance request, exact measurement, and reason for request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Property Owners Affidavit

I (we) \_\_\_\_\_, being first duly sworn, depose and say that I (we) am (are) the current owner of the property involved in this application: that I (we) have read the application and attached plans and other exhibits and are familiar with its contents; and that said contents are in all respects true and correct based upon my personal knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Signature

(co-owner if any)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Signature

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

Residing in \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

## Agent Authorization

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_, the owner(s) of the real property located at \_\_\_\_\_, in Murray City, Utah, do hereby appoint

\_\_\_\_\_, as my (our) agent to represent me (us) with regard to this application affecting the above described real property, and authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to appear on my (our) behalf before any City board or commission considering this application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner's Signature (co-owner if any)

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_, personally appeared before me

\_\_\_\_\_ the signer(s) of the above *Agent Authorization* who duly acknowledge to me that they executed the same.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary public

Residing in \_\_\_\_\_

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

## **VARIANCE ANALYSIS FORM**

(To be filled out by the applicant)

1. Is the applicant being deprived of property rights possessed by other property owners in the area?

2. Is the problem caused by actions of the land owner?

3. What special circumstances are associated with your property that is different from other properties in your zoning district?

4. What special conditions associated with this application constitute a hardship?